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# FREDERICK STUMP

The Founder of Fredericksburg, Pa.

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PAPER READ BEFORE THE

Lebanon County Historical Society

JUNE 26, 1914

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BY

EZRA GRUMBINE, M.D.

MT. ZION, PA.

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Vol. VI

No. 9

6

## PREFACE

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Opening a volume of "Colonial Records" in a public library of Reading, Pa., in the early part of this century, my eyes fell on the phrase, "The Notorious Frederick Stump."

"Why 'notorious,' and why not say the *Famous* Frederick Stump?" I indignantly asked a friend who had accompanied me to the reading room.

I was directed to read further, and then learned more of Stump's adventures, and I determined to do him justice some time in the future, by writing a sketch of his life.

Therefore, when I was requested to read a paper before the Lebanon County Historical Society, I expressed my willingness to do so, though the time was short in which to perform the work, and the following sketch was the result of my labors.

For valuable data I am indebted to Mr. Thos. L. Becker, of Newmanstown; B. M. Strauss, Esq., of Reading, and to Mr. Jacob Shnotterly, of Fredericksburg, who made the draft of my native town.

Nov. 5, 1914.

E. GRUMBINE.

YEAR 1914  
STATE OF PA  
NOV 5 1914

Allen County Public Library  
900 Webster Street  
PO Box 2270  
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## FREDERICK STUMP

*The Founder Of Fredericksburg, Penn'a.*

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### I.

Located a mile and a half to the south of the Little Mountain in Lebanon County, is a raised and somewhat rolling plain, with two purling brooks, one on the east and one on the west, each having its source in springs to the north at the foot of the mountain, and both flowing in a southerly direction for three miles or more, before they merge into one stream.

On this plain, with plenty of fresh water on the east and on the west, a German pioneer laid out a town. This man was Frederick Stump, or as he wrote his name in German, "Friederich Stumb."

Born in Heidelberg Township, then Lancaster County, he was one of sixteen children of Christopher Stump who was twice married, and Frederick was the second son of the first wife. There were eight sons and eight daughters. Christopher Stump, the father of Frederick, was the owner of two negro slaves, named John and Adam, whom in his will he bequeathes to his sons Leonhart and Christopher, respectively. (\*a. m.).

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\* (a) In "Stories of Old Stumpstown," there is a statement that the name of Frederick Stump's father was John Frederick Stump. This is an error as the records of the Lancaster court house show.

(b) Mr. Thomas L. Becker, of Newmanstown, has kindly sent me the following family tree of the original STUMP. His name appears as one of the later SPROUTS:

2

Christopher Stump's  
children of first  
wife.

George Adam  
Frederick  
George  
Christopher  
Martha  
Susanna  
Margaret  
Catharine  
Henry Stump  
Mardalena

died in his minority  
wife of Thomas Shaur,  
wife of John Lehnaweh,  
wife of Ludwig Maris,  
wife of George Adam Bush,  
wife of William Fryman.

Children of second  
wife

Catharine  
Julianna  
Margaret  
Michael  
Christopher  
Leonhart

wife of Leonard Strickler.

both died unmarried, under age  
and without issue.

Marv  
Sallie  
Polly  
Eve  
John  
Leonard

Mrs. Danges

Henry  
John  
Peter  
Leonard  
Cassie  
Mary  
Caroline

died at Slouchsburg.  
Sheelr of Leb. Co.  
died in Millcreek.  
died in Millcreek. (young).  
Mrs. Sheetz, buried at Millbach  
Mrs. Ream, buried at Millbach  
Th. L. Becker



Frederick Stump was one of the bolder and more courageous spirits of his kind and time. His ancestors were among those immigrants who in great numbers flocked from Germany to the hospitable lands of the Penns during the first half of the eighteenth century. As a rule these people were a meek and modest folk. Many of them were poor in spirit as well as in worldly possessions. They and their forbears had suffered from religious and political persecution for years and generations until all spirit of heroism and manly courage had well nigh been crushed out of them. Their "dorfs" and towns, their vineclad hills and fertile meadows in their Fatherland, had oft been the scenes of bloody battles and long-continued wars. They had been the cruel sport of petty princelings and heartless kings; like a shuttlecock they had been tossed from one sceptre to another as the fortunes of a battlefield, the scheming of a courtier or the whims of a royal mistress directed.

When the student of the history of our German forefathers sees in imagination the exodus from their homes of the Palatines in sad-looking bands; when he views them, weary with waiting but more hopeful, on the low shores of Holland; when he beholds them, a half-starved horde of homeless wanderers on the outskirts of London, fed by the seeming bounty of Queen Anne, awaiting transportation across the broad Atlantic in slow sailing vessels; when he again sees them toiling to make tar for the English navy on the banks of the Hudson; when he follows their perilous journeyings through the wilderness down the Susquehanna and up the Swatara, braving winter's frost and springtime's floods, he wonders that they retained enough energy to live!

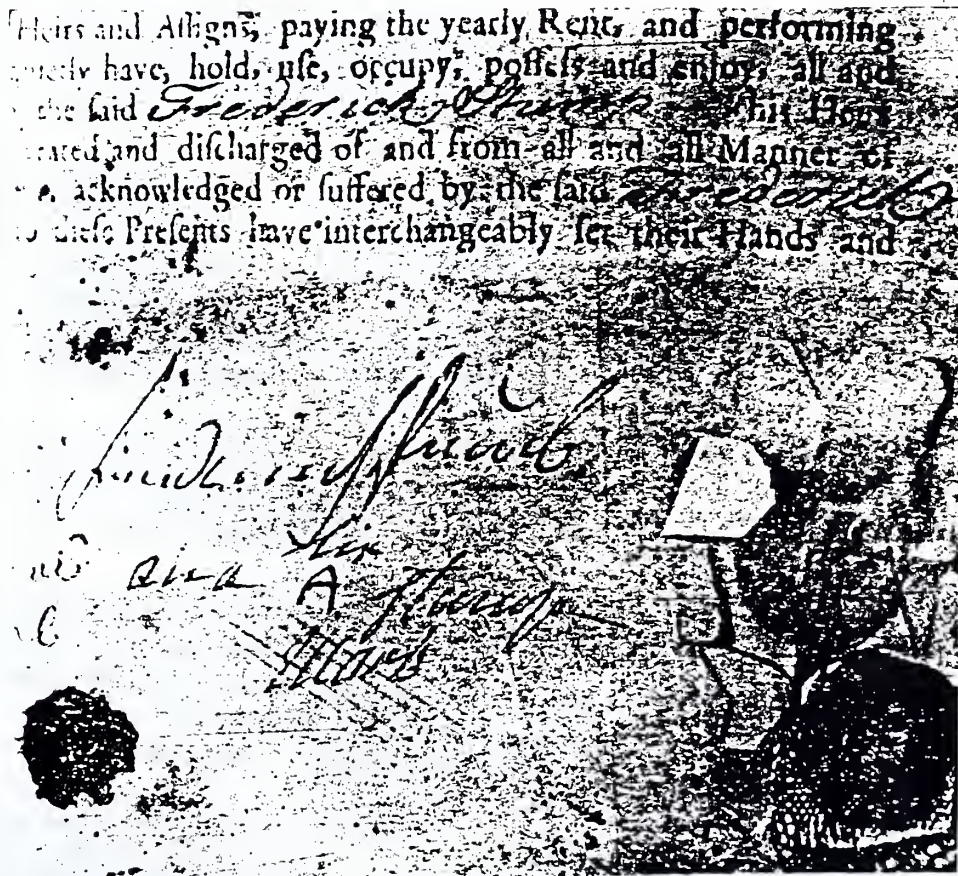
When the student in imagination sails with them in an old-fashioned ship, braving the horrors of seasickness, scurvy and ship fever; when he sees them sold as voluntary serfs in the naval mart of Philadelphia to come here where they worked out their redemption from debt to freedom, he understands in a measure, why for generations the Pennsylvania Germans have remained the retired, modest, home-loving people they have been.

When one further observes them cutting down the "forest primeval," rearing their one-story log dwellings in the wild-

erness, and planting settlements among wild and bloody savages; when he sees the settler's humble homes in flames; the German housewife murdered and her daughter carried away into captivity worse than death, he shudders at the pain, the hardships and the sufferings which his forefathers endured.

II.

Many of the great men of history and many of the adventurous spirits of ancient and modern times, apparently, had no financiering skill, and, though rich in courage and fame, remained poor so far as material wealth goes, and such evidently was the case with Frederick Stump. Although carefully planning the regularity of the streets and alleys of his "New Town," and wisely locating it close to an abundant fresh water supply, yet in matters relating to financiering he was a failure. His education, though limited, was evidently superior to that of many of his contemporaries, for he wrote his name in legible German, spelling it with a final "b" instead of a "p." His wife, Anna, was unable to write, and in signing deeds she made "her mark," as did many women of her time and class. The signatures of the couple are here given as photographed from an old deed.





In 1759 Frederick Stump had a store in Schaefferstown on the southwest corner of the public square of that classic town, where he is said to have owned real estate.

In 1761 he became the owner of a considerable tract of land in Bethel Township, which had been surveyed and patented for John Reynolds in 1738. He at once planned the town, and sold lots as early as May, 1761.

In 1762 he kept a public house in his "new town," for in that year he borrowed from John Sravely 1500 pounds on a mortgage in which he is styled Frederick Stump, "tavern-keeper." He became more seriously embarrassed, for he now gave another mortgage, this time to George Adam Bush, his brother-in-law. He continued the business of selling town lots with a probable interval of a few years, up to the year 1768. In that year he sold a house on East Main street to William Frymoyer, the deed of which bears *only his own and not his wife's signature*, showing that he was a widower at that time.

That was his last business transaction in the village of which we have any record. It is probable, and tradition points that way, that he left the place in 1765 and came back a widower in 1768, to wind up his business affairs by selling the last of his real estate.

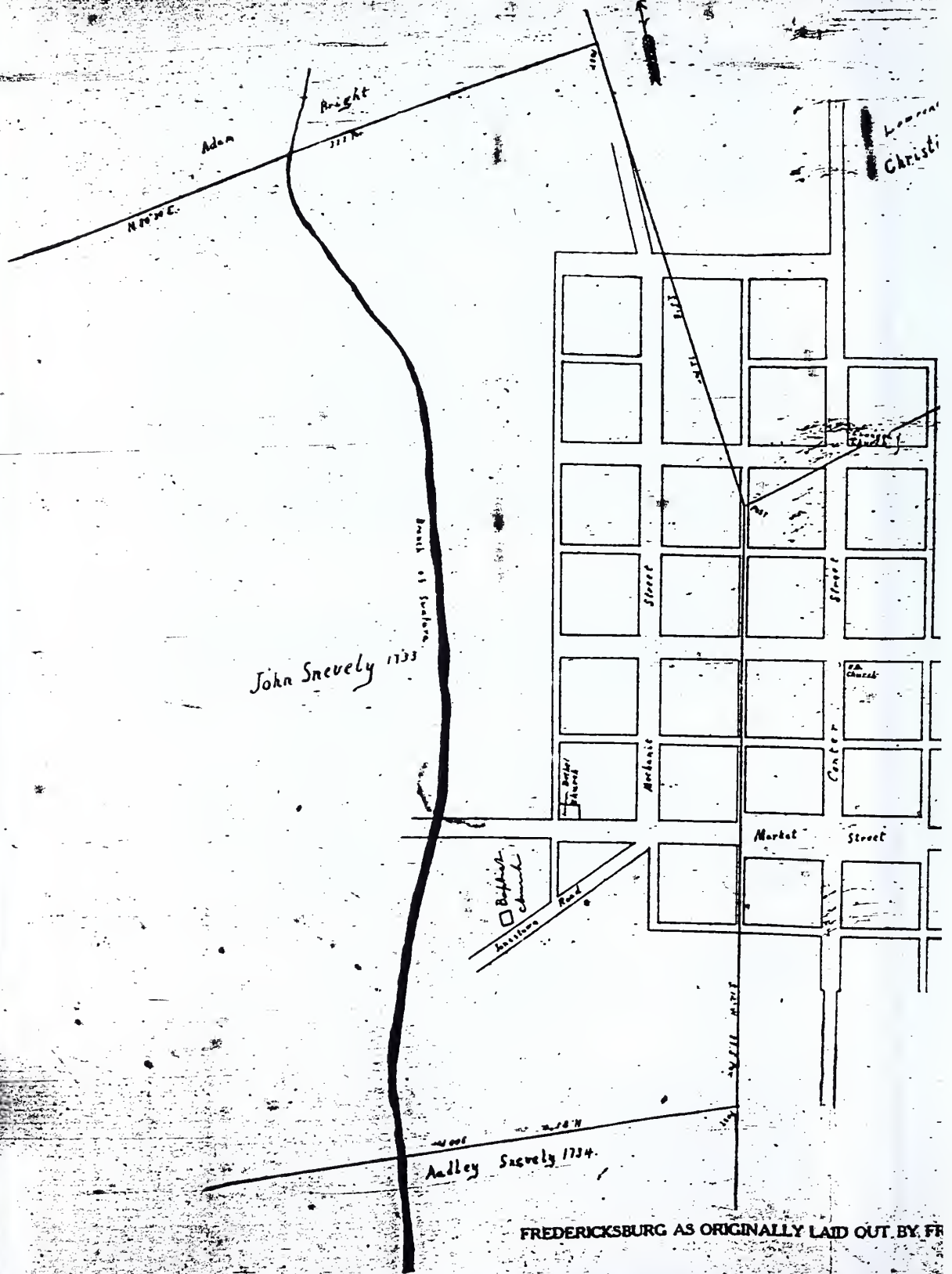
After disposing of his last house and lot, he took his final departure never to return, for we find no trace of him in Stumpstown after that year. He disappears absolutely from the place, and is seen no more in the village which he founded. No records of scrivener's pen, nor printer's ink, remain to tell of any further exploits of his as a promoter in Bethel Township.

The records of the county, then Lancaster, are silent as to Stump's future, but tradition bridges over the gap between his business enterprises here, and his thrilling adventures in the more northern sections of our state.

My grandmother's sister, Elizabeth Fehrer, born in 1785, who in early womanhood married Philip Miller, and who later became the wife of John Herman and reached the age of ninety-two years, told me that her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Fehrer, saw and knew Stump. She related to me

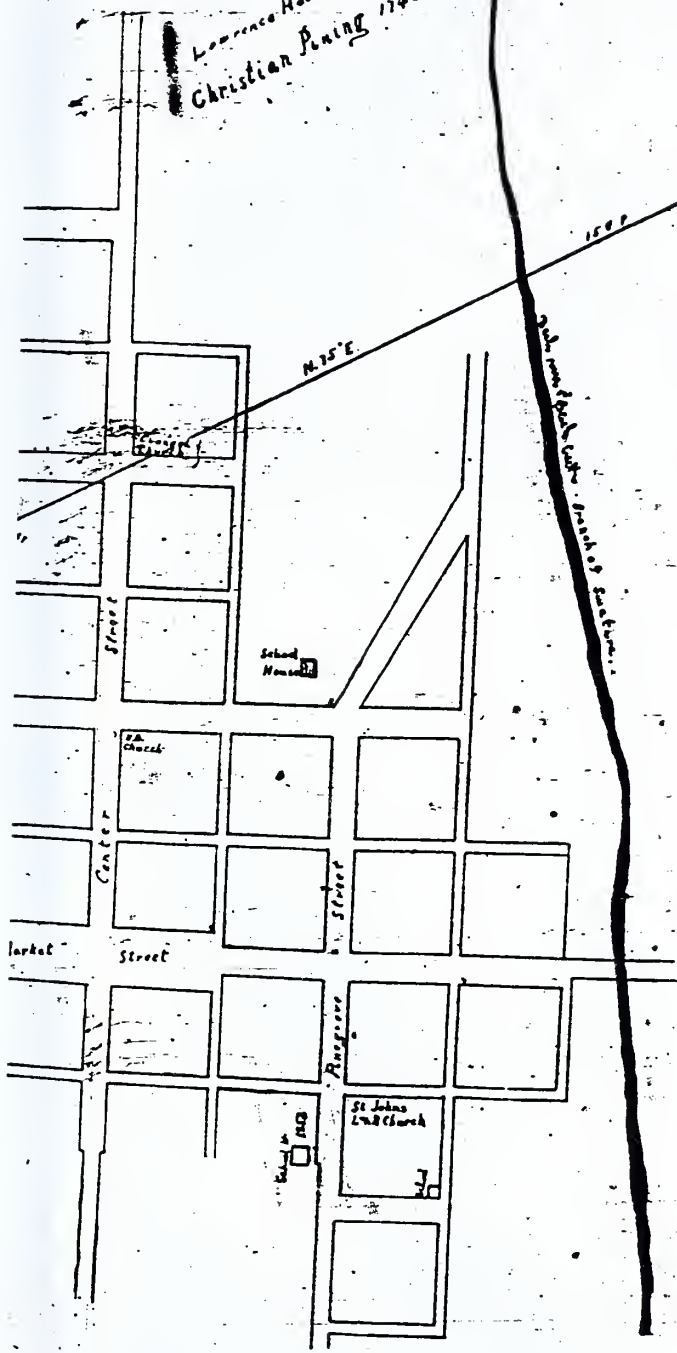






FREDERICKSBURG AS ORIGINALLY LAID OUT BY FR

Lawrence Hunt. 1859  
Christian Ring 1743.



John Reynolds 1732

ILLY LAID OUT BY FREDERICK STUMP





the story that Stump's wife and children were murdered by the Indians somewhere beyond the mountains. Also that he and Hans Eisenhauer, procured bloodhounds and went on the war-path of vengeance. They with their dogs hunted the savages through valley and mountain, and when their victims, climbed trees to get away from the hounds, their pursuers shot them down like wildcats.

Dr. Eg'e in his history of Lebanon County, denies that our Frederick Stump became the "Indian killer," and asserts that the latter was a different person of the same name, but he gives no authority for his assertion, and, since his otherwise excellent work of local history, abounds in errors, this statement no doubt is one of them. Therefore, this story, coming as it does to me from the lips of my great-aunt, who in turn had it by word of mouth from personal acquaintances of Frederick Stump himself, will be accepted as the truth.

## III.

As early as 1768, after selling his last house and lot in Bethel Township, Frederick Stump's name appears in a list of taxable freeholders in Penn Township, which at that time comprised nearly the whole of what is now Snyder County. \* He probably took the proceeds of his last deal in Bethel real estate, bought land in Penn Township, and thus became a taxable freeholder there. In the same list of taxables appears the name of Joseph Reynolds, another emigrant from Bethel. What more like'y than that both should migrate along a beaten trail, from Tulpehocken to Shamokin, together to Penn Township?

It is a matter of recorded history that during the French and Indian wars 133 white persons were killed in Bethel Township by marauding savages; and it is highly probable that Stump's family was murdered by them some time between the years 1765 and 1768. John Spitler was shot by the Indians near his house two miles west of Fredericksburg, in 1757, on a farm which I had the misfortune to own some years ago, and the spot was pointed out to me where he fell. The graveyard, three miles northwest of Fredericksburg, near the spot where stood the Moravian church, which was also used as a dwelling and a schoolhouse, contains a number of graves, whose occupants were slain by the murderous wild men. This building was one in which my great-grandfather, Peter Fehrer, and his family attended divine worship, and in which my grandfather went to school a hundred years ago. Both knew more or less of these Indian massacres, and had their information from persons who lived at the time and in the region in which they took place.

His real estate speculations in founding Fredericksburg turning out disastrously from a financial point, being obliged to mortgage his properties to Snavely and to George Adam Bush, his brother-in-law, and eventually to part with all of his real estate, his wife and children murdered by the bloody

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(\*John B. Linn's "Annals of Buffalo Valley.")

red men; his domestic, social and financial life wrecked and ruined, what more natural than that he should take to the trail between the Swatara regions on the south and Shamokin on the north, to hunt for his red-skinned enemies and wreak his vengeance? This trail was one on which the savage warriors had gone up and down in search of booty, and on murder and destruction bent, during the preceding decade.

Accompanied by Eisenhauer, who, it is said, was a redemptioner and his bound servant, and who probably had grievances of his own against the Indians, he entered upon his scheme of revenge. Adopting the methods practiced by his savage foes, he "fought the devil with fire," and became known as "the Indian killer." It is not told how many he and his partner sent to the hunting grounds of the other world, but they probably were not a few, for we learn that the Indians were hunting him for his life and his scalp in 1767 near Fort Augusta. He was then styled "a noted murderer of Indians."

Three white women who resided at or near Fort Augusta, were startled one day by seeing Stump appear before them, asking for shelter and concealment from the Indians, who were on his trail after he had killed several of their tribe. The women, fearing that the furious wrath of his pursuers might be meted out to them, at first refused to harbor him, but, out of pity, they at length took him in and hid him by stowing him between two feather-beds. The Indians soon came, blustering and threatening and hunting all over the premises, but not finding their man, they picked up a poor cat and tore it to pieces before the women's eyes, to indicate how they would have treated Stump had they caught him. \*

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\*Day.



## IV.

Frederick Stump became a "squatter" in Penn Township, erecting a dwelling on land to which he had no legal title, since it was north of the line bounding the Governor's authority to sell or grant lands by patent to any one. \*

On September 23d, 1766, John Penn, Lieutenant Governor, issued a proclamation "forbidding all his Majesty's subjects from making any settlements beyond the limits of the last Indian purchase within this province"; and said further therein, "and whereas it has been reported that a certain Frederick Stump, a German, settled beyond the limits of the Indian purchase near to Fort Augusta, who had no authority nor warrant for making settlements," etc., etc.

Notwithstanding this proclamation, Frederick Stump and a number of other "squatters," warned thereby, remained where they were after the same was issued, and Stump was there in 1768, though it appears that Penn was still trying to remove the settlers from the lands yet unpurchased from the Indians. \*

The culminating tragedy in Stump's gruesome scheme of vengeance against the fiendish murderers of his wife, took place in what is now Snyder County, on Middle Creek, about a mile from its mouth, near the town of Middleburg, Penn'a. A schoolhouse was many years afterwards located near the spot of the massacre, and was for a long time known as "Stump's Run Academy." Mr. Edwin Charles, Snyder County Historian, locates the spot within 500 yards of the court house.

A party of Indians had pitched their wigwams on the site on which at this time is located the county seat of Snyder County. There were four men, three squaws and three children. The four braves and two of the women left their camping-ground one day, probably to procure supplies in ex-

\*Colonial Records, Volume IX, Page 327.



change for peltries in the larger settlements. The three children remained in their hut in the care of the other squaw.

On Sunday evening, the tenth of January, the six Indians, returning from their expedition, stopped at Stump's dwelling. They were intoxicated and quarrelsome. Possibly they got more rum from Stump, and when helplessly drunk, they became an easy prey to the two revengeful whites. Surely Anna Stump and her children were being avenged! The Indians' bodies were dragged to the frozen waters of Middle Creek and thrust through a hole cut in the ice. The next morning Stump and Ironcutter went up the creek, and finished their work by killing the squaw, the two girls and the papoose, and setting fire to their wigwams.

Fearing consequences, they now fled to a friend near Selinsgrove, and when accused of the deed, they asserted that, fearing the Indians would murder *them*, they killed them in self-defence.

The affair so excited the people of the settlements, who feared a general outbreak of the savages, that explanations were carried to the Chiefs of the Six Nations and other tribes, to the effect that this deed was committed by individual outlaws, for which neither the public nor the government should be held to account.

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, of Philadelphia, issued his warrant for the arrest of Frederick Stump, directing it to the "High Sheriff, Under-Sheriff, Constables, Bailiffs and all other officers of the Province of Pennsylvania, and particularly to those of the counties of Cumberland, Lancaster and Berks."

Captain William Patterson, with nineteen men, arrested Stump and Eisenhauer at the house of George Gabriel, near Selinsgrove, and on January 23, eleven days after the bloody deed was committed, both men were lodged in the old log jail at Carlisle. Patterson, very much afraid of a bloody Indian outbreak, hurriedly made the capture without direct orders from the authorities, and also took it upon himself to placate the savages by sending a messenger to them with the statement that the offenders were caught and that they would surely be punished. \*

\*Colonial Records.

## V.

For a week the prisoners lay in irons in jail. In the meantime orders had been received from the Chief Justice that the Sheriff at Carlisle should bring them to Philadelphia for an examination or hearing. But the local officials advised against their removal beyond the jurisdiction of Cumberland County. The friends of Stump and his sympathisers, especially such as had also suffered from the depredations of the Indians, feared he would not get a fair trial in the city of the Quakers, who were blamed for being biassed in favor of the red men, and for generally taking sides with them against the white settlers in their troubles along the borders.

It has been thought that the people of Carlisle also viewed the affair in its *legal* light, for there is a sacred and fundamental principle of justice, the pride and boast of English jurisprudence and still a bulwark of our liberties, which requires that "in all criminal prosecutions by indictment or information, the accused shall have a speedy public trial by an *impartial jury of the vicinage*." The Philadelphians well knew that no jury could be gotten in Cumberland County, that would convict Stump or Ironcutter, hence they were to be taken to that city for trial. It would appear that the Quaker element in control of the government at Philadelphia had a great deal of love and respect for the Indian and cared perhaps more for his welfare than for the settlers. They treated them as fellow-men, and endeavored by *kindness* to convert them to their ethics, while the frontiersmen knew them to be cruel, treacherous and murderous. The early white inhabitants of Bethel when it was a part of Lancaster County, knew that a *good* Indian was a dead Indian, and none were aware of this fact so well as Frederick Stump and his friends. No wonder they were afraid of the kind of justice which would be meted out to them in a case of Indian against Settler in a Philadelphia court.

Moreover, a number of officials and "limbs of the law" at Carlisle saw a vision of Pounds, Shillings and Pence, in the shape of *fees*, slipping away from them and going to the city of brotherly love.

From day to day the orders were not obeyed. There was delay. It was cold midwinter; the ice on the Susquehanna

threatened to break up, rendering the crossing dangerous; the roads between Carlisle and Philadelphia were very bad, and these conditions, and others, served as excuses for the delay. Then, on the morning of the 29th of January, something happened! In the middle of the forenoon a procession of about eighty men, variously armed, marched through the streets of Carlisle and surrounded the log jail. They found little difficulty in gaining entrance; they secured the protesting sheriff, and soon had Frederick Stump and Hans Eisenhauer in their midst in the open streets of the town.

They proceeded in a southerly direction, not in search of a tree on which to hang prisoners by lynch law, but towards the border line and freedom, beyond Quaker jurisdiction. They were not lynchers, but rescuers, and the party was largely composed of settlers from Shearman's Creek Valley, many of whom had also been sufferers at the hands of the Indians. They thought it an injustice that Stump and his companion should be punished when bloody redskins, guilty of murdering scores of white persons, were at large, and they resented the removal of the prisoners to Philadelphia, where it was almost certain they would be hanged. In Maryland and Virginia they would be free.

This rescue caused intense excitement and a great deal of quaint-sounding correspondence between the authorities at Philadelphia and those at Carlisle. A reward of 200 Pounds was offered for Stump's recapture, and the following description of the two men was published: \*

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\*Rupp's History.

\*Colonial Records.



## FREDERICK STUMP!

Frederick Stump, born in Heidelberg Township, Lancaster County, in Pennsylvania, of German parents. He is about 33 years of age, five feet eight inches high, a stout, active fellow and well-proportioned, of a brown complexion, thin-visaged, has small black eyes with a down-cast look, and wears short black hair. He speaks the German language and the English but indifferently. He had on when rescued, a light brown coat, a blue great-coat, an old hat, leather breeches, blue leggins and moccasins.

## JOHN IRONCUTTER!

John Ironcutter, born in Germany, is about nineteen years of age and five feet six inches high; a thick clumsy fellow, round shouldered, of a dark brown complexion, has a smooth face, grey eyes, wears short brown hair, and speaks very little English. He had on when rescued, a blanket coat, an old felt hat, buckskin breeches, a pair of long trousers, coarse white yarn stockings and shoes with brass buckles.

Thus they were described, and a tempting reward was set upon their heads, but they were never re-captured. Frederick Stump and his servant Hans Eisenhauer, known as John Ironcutter in official papers, were not long in crossing Mason and Dixon's line, into a country where Quaker Governors and Carlisle Sheriffs had no jurisdiction.

We can imagine them taking leave of their friends when far enough away from Cumberland County jailors, to travel in safety without their friendly escort. The cordial handshakings, the hearty slapping of shoulders, the loud laughter and warm tears, the coarse jokes and the honest good wishes exchanged between the Indian-killing heroes and their sympathizing rescuers, would fill another page.

What became of the two men eventually, this history sayeth not. Tradition, however, hands down the story that Stump continued the life of a pioneer, and drifted to the southwest, but where his checkered life ended and where his bones at



## FREDERICK STUMP

length found rest, is not known. It has been said that the State of Tennessee are persons bearing the name Stump, who may be descendants of Fredericksburg's father. This is not improbable. He was a young man of thirty when he left his native state, and may have found a woman to take the place of his murdered and deeply avenged Anna, and may have raised a family amid more peaceful scenes, where the Indians ceased from troubling, and the dead could rest. When he is spoken of he should not be "the notorious," but the *Famous Frederick Stump*.









**HECKMAN**

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